

DEVELOPMENTAL GROUP COUNSELING USING STRUCTURED PLAY  
WITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISRUPTIVE CHILDREN

By

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DEVELOPMENTAL GROUP COUNSELING USING STRUCTURED PLAY  
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The purpose of this study was to measure the therapeutic effectiveness of a developmentally based group counseling unit, the Disruptive Child's Play Group (DCPG). The unit utilized structured play process with young children who were identified as disruptive in the classroom. Specifically, the study examined eight hypotheses regarding the subjects' self-esteem and classroom behavior as related to, or in the absence of, the Disruptive Child's Play Group.

Children who exhibited disruptive behavior were selected from the third grade of 13 schools in Alachua County, Florida. From this group an experimental group (N=71) and a control group (N=66) were randomly selected from a separate list of boys and girls for each school. There were 62 girls and 75 boys included in the research.

The study lasted a total of eight weeks. During the first week, the counselor from each of the 13 schools randomly assigned students to experimental and control groups. During the second week, each counselor collected preassessment data. The teachers

of children in the study were asked to complete the items related to four factors of the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale and the entire Walker Problem Identification Checklist. The subjects completed the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale.

Over the next five weeks the treatment, the DCPG, was led by the elementary counselor in each school. The control group received no treatment at that time. During the eighth week, the same criterion measures as in the preassessment were administered for postassessment.

The data collected were analyzed by multiple regression analyses to determine the effects of the two independent variables (group and sex of subject) on each of the dependent variable measures. These data related directly to the following hypotheses:

1. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Classroom Disturbance, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.
2. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Impatience, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.
3. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Disrespect-Defiance, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.
4. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Irrelevant-Responsiveness, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.

5. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by teachers on the Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist.
6. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding self-esteem, as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.
7. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale.
8. There will be no significant differences in the criterion measures on the basis of sex.

No significant differences were found for Hypotheses One, Two, Four, Five, Seven, and Eight at the .05 level of confidence. These hypotheses were not rejected. However, Hypotheses Three and Six were rejected at the .05 level of confidence. The DCPG group significantly increased their self-esteem, as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. In addition, the DCPG group significantly decreased their disrespect for or resistance to the school, subject matter, and the teacher, as measured by the Disrespect-Defiance factor of the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Disruptive behavior in the classroom has been a continual source of frustration and tension to students, teachers, and administrators. As a result, school counselors have been called upon to help with this problem. Among the various techniques used by counselors in dealing with disruptive children has been group counseling. Can group counseling using structured play process help children control their disruptive behavior?

### Need for this Study

There is some evidence to suggest that aggressiveness correlates with inadequate school adjustment and low academic performance. Disruptive behavior also adversely affects relationships with peers and teachers.

As a result of disruptive behavior, learning objectives often cannot be accomplished. A teacher's stress may influence his or her rapport with other students and thereby affect the learning process. Students who watch outbursts of aggression and teacher-student conflict may find themselves distracted, frightened, intimidated, or unwillingly involved. Thus, their learning is impaired. Disruptive students themselves often

exhibit learning problems since their behaviors are not conducive to appropriate learning.

The disruptive child may be considered a socialization failure. According to Hewett (1968),

The term socialization is used . . . to refer to the process by which these expectations [expectations of society] are learned and met by members of a society during the course of their development from infancy to adulthood. At each age level, certain behaviors, capabilities, knowledge, beliefs, and customs must be acquired if successful adaptation to the environment is to occur. As an individual's behavior deviates from what is expected for his age, sex, and status it is maladaptive and he may experience serious difficulties in getting along. (p. 3)

Controlling disruptive behavior is one expectation of society. Such control is usually a function of the family and the school. Considering the effect of disruptive behavior such socialization by the school is extremely important. There is also the belief that children who exhibit disruptive behavior in school are likely to become delinquent. Due to the disruptive child's effect on teachers, students, administrators, and society, the need for this study becomes evident.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to measure the therapeutic effectiveness of a developmentally based group counseling unit, The Disruptive Child's Play Group (DCPG). The unit utilized structured play process with young children who were identified as disruptive in the classroom. The following questions were investigated:

1. What effect will the DCPG have on teacher's perception of the disruptive school behavior of the group member?



2. What effect will the DCPG have on a group member's level of self-esteem?
3. What effect will the DCPG have on a group member's perception of his or her own behavior?

### Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this investigation, the following definitions were applied:

Disruptive behavior: Behavior which is considered socially unacceptable in a classroom (e.g. shouting, hitting, teasing, tripping others, kicking, running around, throwing objects, disturbing others, hurting others' feelings, verbal abuse) and which interrupts normal classroom procedures. The terms disruptive and/or aggressive behavior will be used interchangeably.

Disruptive child: A child who exhibits disruptive, aggressive behavior according to a teacher report.

Play media: A variety of toys and materials which encourage the use of imagination and elicit emotional expression (e.g. art supplies, clay, puppets, dolls, punching bags, trucks, games).

Structured play process: A process in which the counselor leads the child into structured play situations using play media in order to elicit feelings and behaviors.

### Rationale for the Study

In the past, many solutions to the problem of disruptive

children have been offered but such problems continue to plague teachers, as reported in professional literature and popular magazines. Some of these methods include ignoring the behavior, isolation, punishment, modeling appropriate behavior, behavior modification, individual counseling, and group counseling. This experimenter suggested the utilization of group counseling incorporating structured play process to bring about a decrease in disruptive behavior.

Since much of what children learn occurs in groups, it is believed that group counseling offers the most effective and economical method for helping children acquire new learnings and unlearn inappropriate attitudes and behaviors. Dinkmeyer and Caldwell (1970) stressed that developmental group counseling can lead to more positive progress in the classroom situation. The small group counseling unit studied here, the DCPG, is based upon the objectives and goals of developmental group counseling. The basic goals of developmental groups for the group member are to (a) know and understand himself, (b) develop self-acceptance and a feeling of being worthwhile in his own right, (c) develop methods of coping with the developmental tasks of life, (d) develop self-direction, better problem solving skills, and better decision making abilities, and (e) develop sensitivity to the needs of others (Dinkmeyer & Caldwell, 1970).

There is some evidence to support the use of play in group counseling. It has been suggested that children use play to cope with, communicate, and integrate a variety of emotional experiences, experiences that might otherwise be overwhelming

to the child. Therefore, a counselor can learn about a child through play, and assist the child to explore and accept his feelings, and change his behavior.

Through a combination of structured play process in a group setting, the DCPG was an attempt to control disruptive behavior exhibited by third grade children. It is based on a developmental approach to counseling.

### Organization of the Study

The remainder of this study is organized into four additional chapters plus appendices. A review of the literature on disruptive behavior, group counseling, play process, and group counseling using play process is included in Chapter II. Chapter III contains the methods and procedures of the study which includes hypotheses, design of the study, descriptions of evaluative measures, and the treatment. The results are presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V includes a summary of the study and a discussion of the results as well as recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In order to understand and deal with disruptive behavior in children it is necessary to be aware of the cause and possible treatments of such behavior. The review of the literature related to this study is focused on the following areas: (a) disruptive behavior, (b) group counseling, (c) play process, and (d) group counseling using play process.

#### Disruptive Behavior

##### Causes of Disruptive Behavior

There are many differing theories on the cause of aggression. Some of these positions include aggression as (a) an instinct, (b) a consequence of a frustrating event, (c) an attempt to reduce tension caused by anger, (d) a result of environmental factors, and (e) a result of low self-concept.

Some theorists such as Freud (1930) believe that much of man's aggressiveness is innate. Prior to World War I, Freud had emphasized the life force (libido or eros) as the biological source of human motivation. However, the vast destruction of the war convinced Freud that man is not only impelled by libido but by another set of drives he named "death instincts" (Jones, 1955). He believed the primary function of death instincts to

be the destruction and return of man to an inanimate state and outright aggression was seen as the manifestation of these instincts.

Loewenstein (1961), one other leading proponent of aggression as an instinct, distinguished three aspects of the death instinct:

1. A primary self-destructive instinct,
2. The self-destructive instinct turning outward and leading to aggression, and
3. Destructiveness as an independent instinct rather than the united sexual and life instincts.

Along with others (Hartmann, Kris, & Loewenstein, 1971), he rejected the first two assumptions but accepted the third, formulating a theory of aggression as an independent instinct.

A more modern theorist, Lorenz (1966) also takes the view that aggression is innate. He adds the idea that man's inhibitions against the expression of aggression are developing slower than his rapid technological development. He believes that the only solution to this problem is to provide men with some acceptable opportunities to discharge their aggressive instincts.

Buss (1961) summarized the various arguments for an instinct of aggression:

Aggression is pervasive and universal, and much aggression cannot be explained on a reactive basis; psychotic acts of murder, suicide, or long-awaited revenge. The phenomena of sadism and masochism indicate the presence of an innate pleasure in inflicting pain on others or the self. There is an unlearned physiological pattern for rage, the

predecessor of attack. Finally, aggression occurs so early in development that it must be innate. (p. 196)

A differing view on aggression is found in the form of the "frustration-aggression hypothesis" which states that aggression is a highly probable response to a frustrating event (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939). According to Dollard et al. (1939), "the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression" (p. 1).

This notion, that aggression is a result of frustration, has been accepted widely (Buss, 1961). However, there have been two outstanding exceptions. Maslow (1941) denied that simple frustration would lead to aggression. He believed aggression would be caused only by attack or threat. Rosenzweig (1944) also said that nonthreatening stimuli is not enough to lead to aggression, but that threatening, frustrative stimuli would lead to aggression. Such threatening stimuli meant attack, insult, annoyance, or any form of aversive situation.

Others believe that anger is often the cause of some disruptive or aggressive act by a child. According to Buss (1963) anger is a kind of emotional arousal which constitutes a physical state of tension. The child feels this tension and even reports being stirred up, aroused, tense, excited, or tight. Both Berlyne (1967) and Buss (1963) believe that a child may act aggressively or disruptively because such behavior reduces this arousal and is rewarding. After their investigation of autonomic

responses during aggressive interchange, Hokanson, Willers, and Koropsak (1968) also supported the view that aggressive behavior can reduce arousal.

Some believe that aggression is a social act influenced by experience and learning. There are two ways in which a child could learn aggressive behavior. One way is selective reinforcement (Brown & Elliot, 1965; Patterson, Littman, & Bricker, 1967). Often for example, a child may receive more attention from the teacher if he exhibits disruptive or aggressive behavior. He may receive little or no attention when his behavior is on task. Therefore, the attention becomes the reward for his disruptive behavior. The second learning method is by imitating or modeling aggressive behavior (Bandura & Huston, 1961; Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961, 1963a, 1963b). The child through observation of aggressive adults and peer models may learn disruptive behavior without selective reinforcement.

Bandura and Walters (1959) and Glueck and Glueck (1950) emphasized the child rearing factor of aggressive behavior. From their studies they found that the disruptive, antisocial person comes from an environment characterized by parental rejection, family problems, punitive discipline, and inconsistency. Sears, Moccoby, and Levin (1957), in a carefully researched study, found that disruptive behavior was associated with such environmental factors as parental permissiveness for aggression, the use of physical punishment, and a low self-concept of the mother.

Lastly, there is evidence (Coopersmith, 1959; Jersild, 1951; McCandless, 1961) which indicates that children with poor perceptions of themselves, when compared with those who have a more positive self-image, are more anxious, less well adjusted, less effective, less honest, more defensive, and more hostile.

It is evident that there are many theories on aggression, frustration, and anger. All can be debated. However, it cannot be denied that, whatever the cause may be, many children frequently display disruptive behavior. When this type of behavior occurs in the classroom it destroys the learning climate and becomes an immediate problem.

According to Brembeck (1962) no problem is mentioned more frequently by new teachers than discipline in the classroom. These new teachers claimed that no other problem made greater demands upon their growing skills. From their experiences in the classroom they all agreed that there are always a few students who have the power to cause endless conflicts and frustrations in the classroom. Breneck (1962) added that most new teachers are told that establishing discipline in the classroom is the toughest problem. However this warning holds little meaning for them until they make mistakes and suffer the consequences.

According to Ginott (1972) every teacher knows that "love is not enough." Neither is "creating rapport" or "making it interesting." A teacher can be warm, patient, and loving and still be unable to survive in the classroom (Ginott, 1972). There must be specific methods or techniques to deal with



disruptive behavior in children so that classroom learning will not be interrupted. What are some of the techniques that have been used to control aggressive behavior?

### Techniques of Controlling Aggression and Disruptive Behavior

One difficult task for a child is to learn to control his disruptive behavior and to discriminate between permissible behavior and behavior deemed unacceptable by society. Dinkmeyer and Caldwell (1970) said,

One of the important tasks in growing up is learning how to cope with one's feelings. The elementary school years provide a number of challenges in coping with changes in schedule, rules, and the expectations of significant adults both in the school and in the home. The child must develop the flexibility to bounce back emotionally when angry, to be able to manage teasing and the impulsive actions of children. He must learn to keep his temper while recognizing that some emotions such as anger and fear are normal. In this area the counselor helps him to manage his hostility while learning appropriate means and times for expressing hostility or alternative responses.  
(p. 97)

Parents and teachers must help children keep aggressive behavior within bounds. There have been many techniques used in attempting to control disruptive behavior.

One of the more common methods used by parents and teachers to deal with disruptive behavior is ignoring (Redl & Wineman, 1957). By planned ignoring Redl and Wineman (1957) suggest the ability of an adult to size up a child's surface behavior and limit interference only to behaviors which may cause serious harm or would not stop from their own exhaustion. Often a child will refrain from aggressive behavior if the teacher ignores such behavior and the child does not get the attention he seeks.

However, the technique is limited since some behaviors are so offensive or dangerous that they cannot be ignored. It is not always an easy task to discriminate between behavior which can be ignored and behavior which is harmful or offensive. In addition, ignoring in itself does not deal with the underlying emotional problem.

Another commonly used technique is proximity and touch control (Redl & Wineman, 1957). Every teacher knows how aggressiveness may often be controlled by increasing the physical proximity between child and adult. Just as the baby often stops crying when picked up, without waiting for the source of its discomfort to be removed, the child can sometimes control his disruptive impulses if he sits close to an adult. With some children proximity is not enough. They need direct physical contact, which Redl and Wineman call "touch control." Thus, putting the arm around a child's shoulder or patting him in a friendly way while making a limiting demand often is sufficient to calm him and curtail the oncoming disruptive act. However, it is not always possible for a teacher to be in close proximity to the disruptive child. This technique does not deal with the underlying problem of the child.

Goodenough (1931) listed the following methods used by teachers or parents in dealing with problem behavior:

scolding  
reasoning  
threatening  
frightening  
coaxing  
bribery  
praise

appeal to self-esteem or humor  
spanking  
other corporal punishments  
deprivation of privileges  
putting in a chair  
putting to bed  
deprivation of food

soothing	isolation
ridicule	ignoring
appeal to the emotions	diversion of child's attention
social approval or	removal of source of trouble
disapproval	

One of the most common methods of inhibiting aggression is through the use of punishment. There have been some studies which seem to indicate that punishment does seem to have a temporary suppressing effect on disruptive behavior (Hollenberg & Sperry, 1951). However, punishment has been shown to lead to adverse effects. According to Ziph (1960), the punished child learns to dislike the punitive agent, parent or teacher, and the activity with which the punishment is associated. Furthermore, the child, identifying with the aggressor, may play the punishing role of the parent or teacher in his peer relations. In addition, the long-term effect of punishment, especially physical punishment, may increase aggression (Becker, 1964).

There are those who believe that aggression is a learned response, and therefore can be unlearned as well. Children have been trained to react nonaggressively to situations which would ordinarily elicit an aggressive response (Davitz, 1952; Updegraffe & Keister, 1937; Walters & Brown, 1963). In a study conducted by Davitz (1952) some children were trained to act aggressively, while other children were trained to act cooperatively. Following this training, the children were exposed to a frustrating experience. The aggressively trained children responded more aggressively while cooperatively trained children responded constructively.

This study and the modeling experiments of Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1961, 1963a) and Walters and Brown (1963) seem to indicate that children can learn aggressiveness from aggressive models. These studies propose the use of selective reinforcement and nonaggressive models as methods for inhibiting disruptive behavior. Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1961) devised a series of experiments to test the extent to which children will copy aggressive behavior when this behavior was shown by adult models in three different situations: in real life, on film, and as cartoon characters on film. In all three situations the model was physically and verbally attacking a Bobo doll. After viewing these models each child was taken to an observation room where his play behavior was recorded. The results left little doubt that exposure to aggression heightens aggressive tendencies in children. Those who had seen aggressive models behaved more aggressively than those in the control group. These studies suggested that if a child models aggressive behavior he can also model nonaggressive behavior.

Attempts have also been made to control behavior through behavior modification. This method is based on behaviorist theories such as that of Skinner and has been successful in the classroom (Gagne', 1965; Hewett, 1963; Orlando & Bijou, 1960; Skinner, 1968). According to Krumboltz and Thoresen (1969) behaviorism, or behavior modification, is based on two fundamental laws of learning: (a) behavior that is rewarded will persist or increase and (b) behavior that is not rewarded or is punished will decrease or stop.

Quay (1966) utilized behavior modification within a classroom with "conduct disorder" children who exhibited aggressive behavior in school. Quay rewarded his students by flashing a light on their desks if they were paying attention to the teacher during a group listening period. Later, the light flash was rewarded with a piece of candy, and attending behavior of the children increased dramatically during the time of the study.

In a successful program by Whelan (1966), emotionally disturbed children earned points for appropriate behavior and task completion. At any time during the day these points were able to be traded for free time to spend on the playground, doing artwork, etc. During this free time the child carried a timer which reminded him (by the ringing of a bell) when he had spent his earned minutes.

Although behavior modification can sometimes be used successfully to eliminate particular observable disruptive behaviors there are some drawbacks. First, since only the observable behavior is dealt with, underlying emotional difficulties of the child may be neglected. In fact, it might be the emotional difficulties which need to be dealt with most of all. If some behaviors of a child are controlled, emotional difficulties may cause other disruptive behaviors to occur. Second, behavior modification is not always practical. It is often difficult and sometimes impractical to find an appropriate reward for a child. Even if a suitable reward is found it may serve as a reinforcer only for a limited time.

This experimenter proposed the use of developmental group counseling using structured play process. It was hoped that this technique would reduce disruptive behavior as well as deal with the underlying emotional difficulties of the child. What results have been found about group counseling with children?

### Group Counseling with School Children

According to Dinkmeyer and Caldwell (1970), "Group counseling involves the process of two or more people working together, with the assistance of a trained counselor, to explore and develop the basis for investigating and considering common concerns more effectively" (p. 137). These authors believe that groups provide the opportunity for each person to engage in an interpersonal process in which he works with peers to explore his feelings, beliefs, values, and concerns, thus helping him to deal more effectively with his developmental problems.

Mahler (1969) described group counseling as,

The process of using group interaction to facilitate deeper self-understanding and self-acceptance. There is a need for a climate of mutual respect and acceptance so that individuals can loosen their defenses sufficiently to explore both the meaning of behavior and new ways of behaving. The concerns and problems encountered are centered in the developmental tasks of each member rather than on pathological blocks and distortions of reality. (p. 11)

Gazda, Duncan, and Meadows (1967) described group counseling as,

. . . a dynamic interpersonal process focusing on conscious thought and behavior and involving the therapy functions of permissiveness, orientation

to reality, catharsis and mutual trust, caring, understanding, acceptance and support. The therapy functions are created and nurtured in a small group through the sharing of personal concerns with one's peers and the counselor(s). The group counselees are basically normal individuals with various concerns which are not debilitating to the extent requiring extensive personality change. The group counselees may utilize the group interaction to increase understanding and acceptance of values and goals and to learn and/or unlearn certain attitudes and behaviors. (p. 305)

The above authors agreed that group counseling is a process in which a child can explore his feelings, behaviors, attitudes, and common problems. This process takes place within a trusting and accepting atmosphere.

#### Rationale for Group Counseling

Contemporary workers in the field of school counseling believe that counseling should be done in groups. Faust (1968) discussed two concepts which favor group counseling over individual counseling. First, group counseling is economical in that it enables the counselor to work with a greater number of children at one time. Second, since much of what children learn occurs in groups, it is believed that group counseling is the most effective method for the acquisition of new learning and the unlearning of inappropriate attitudes and behaviors.

Dinkmeyer (1968) believes that the major therapeutic effects of group counseling stem from the idea that most problems are basically social or interpersonal in nature. Group counseling provides actual experience in social interaction. Such interaction, in a safe atmosphere, provides children the opportunity to explore feelings, behaviors, alternative behaviors, and consequences.

A group counseling situation also enables the child to see that others have similar problems and that his are not unique. According to Faust (1968), learning that other children feel the same way tends to reduce feelings of inadequacy or guilt that very often cause anxiety and ineffective learning.

Carkhuff (1969) believes that the core of functioning (or disfunctioning) and the core of the helping process are interpersonal. He therefore supports groups as the best means of treating difficulties in interpersonal functioning. The child can use a group to try out new alternative behaviors, as well as receive feedback on inappropriate old ones.

The above authors believe that a child can indeed benefit from group counseling. What results have been found about group counseling in schools?

#### Effects of Group Counseling with School Children

The effects of group counseling on students' achievement and adjustment have been researched. In terms of achievement Creange (1971) found that underachieving ninth grade students who were exposed to weekly group counseling sessions earned significantly higher grade point averages after counseling than a control group which had no counseling. In addition, children were absent less and teacher evaluations were more positive for the experimental group than for the control group. Positive results on reading performance were found by Crider (1966) using selected guidance activities. A combination of remedial reading and group counseling (Strickler, 1965), and group counseling with students and their mothers (Shatter, 1957) have also been found to improve reading performance.



Moulin (1970) examined the effects of client-centered group counseling on 24 underachieving elementary school children. Significant results were obtained in the Non-Language section of the California Test of Mental Maturity (CTMM) and in meaningful language usage as measured by the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities.

Other studies, however, did not yield such positive results in relation to achievement. For example, Ohlsen and Gazda (1965) examined group counseling with fifth graders and found no significant improvement in grades, behavior inventory scores, achievement test scores, perceptions of self, or social acceptance. Clements (1963) and Lerche (1968) also did not find group counseling to be effective.

Winkler, Tregland, Munger, and Kranzler (1965) examined the effects of counseling and remedial techniques in altering grade point average of underachieving fourth grade students. These underachievers participated in various counseling and reading instruction for 14 one-half hour sessions. No significant changes were reported.

Crow (1971) also found no significant gains in grades as a result of group counseling. In a study by Myrick and Haight (1972) with secondary school underachievers, group counseling had no significant effect on grades and absenteeism. However, teacher evaluations of students in the group indicated improved work habits, greater self-confidence, reduced tension, and more positive attitudes.

Group counseling techniques have also been researched on

various adjustment variables such as attitudes toward school, peers, teachers, and self-concept. For example, Davis (1948) counseled nine children in two groups. She obtained daily reports from teachers, photographed the children at play, and used a sociometric test in pre, post, and follow-up testing. It was found that the group counseling increased social acceptance in the classroom.

Eldridge, Barcikowski, and Witmer (1973) researched the effects of the DUSO program on self-concepts of rural Appalachian primary school children. Ninety-eight students in the second grade were divided into two treatment and two control groups. The experimental group received 25 thirty-minute sessions during five weeks using Unit I of the DUSO program. A significant difference in the self-concept of the children, as measured by the DUSO-AD-I, was obtained. The DUSO-AD-I purports to measure understanding and acceptance of self. However, no differences were found by the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and the California Test of Personality. The authors believe that the instruments were not measuring the same dimension of the self-concept construct.

Other studies have shown positive changes in sociometric level as a result of group counseling (Kranzler, Mayer, Doyer, & Munger, 1966; Schiffer, 1967; Thombs & Muro, 1973). Reinforcement techniques have been used to improve the sociometric status of sixth graders (Hansen, Niland, & Zani, 1969), social acceptance among fifth graders (Barclay, 1967), social approach behavior of third grade boys (Clement & Milne, 1967), and

classroom behavior of third, fourth, and fifth grade children (Hinds & Roehlke, 1970). However, Mayer, Kranzler, and Matthes (1967) compared the effects of group counseling and selected guidance techniques upon fifth and sixth grade students' peer relationships. When the treatment condition and control group were compared no significant differences were found among them. In addition, Biasco (1966), using fourth, fifth, and sixth graders of low sociometric status, compared the effects of several treatments and found no differences between counseled and noncounseled students.

Modeling techniques have also been used in group counseling. Thomas (1974) used videotaped modeling with first graders in an attempt to increase attending behavior of students from disadvantaged families. Videotapes of any attending disadvantaged child were presented to the experimental groups. Attending behavior was defined as behavior which indicated that a child was giving attention to material being presented. The results of this study indicated that a short-term guidance program using modeling is an effective method for increasing attending behavior.

Warner, Niland, and Maynard (1971) used modeling techniques with fifth graders who could not be satisfied with anything less than a grade of A or B, but were getting C's or lower. Models of children who were achieving at the C level and satisfied were included in the treatment group. The control group was just a free discussion group. The models seemed to be more effective than did free discussion groups. The model-

reinforcement counseling helped students set realistic goals with which they could be satisfied.

Howard and Zimpfer (1972) in their review of the literature on group approaches in the elementary school believe that the overall direction is more positive than negative. Ohlsen (1973) stated that the most common positive results include children's improved interpersonal skills, acceptance of self and others, acceptance by others, class participation, congruence between perception of real self and ideal self, school achievement, and classroom behavior.

This researcher proposed the use of play process in a group setting. What is the theory behind play process?

### Theory of Play Process

Theory (Erikson, 1963; Pellar, 1952; Piaget, 1962; Waelder, 1933) suggests that children use play to cope with, communicate, and integrate a variety of emotional experiences, experiences that might otherwise be overwhelming to the child. A counselor can therefore learn much about a child through play, help him to understand and accept his feelings, and change his behavior. Both Axline (1947) and Harms (1971) believe play to be the language of children. Since a young child's verbal skills are not developed to a high level many children find it easier to communicate through the use of play media.

Through this natural medium of self-expression the child is given the opportunity to play out his feelings of tension, frustration, aggression, fear, and confusion. By playing out

these feelings he brings them to the surface, gets them out in the open, learns ways of controlling them, or completely abandons them. In the security of a playroom, where the child is the most important person and where he is in command of both the situation and himself, he can test out his ideas and express himself fully. He then begins to realize the power within himself to be an individual in his own right, to think for himself, and to make his own decisions (Axline, 1947).

Conn (1955) stated that "Every therapeutic play method is a form of learning process during which the child learns to accept and to utilize constructively that degree of personal responsibility and self-discipline necessary for effective self-expression and social living" (p. 753).

Amster (1943) stated that,

Play is an activity a child comprehends and in which he is comfortable, an integral part of his world, his method of communication, his medium of exchange, and his means of testing, partly incorporating and mastering external realities.

. . . Provision of play materials means the provision of a natural means of communication, through which the child's problems may be expressed more readily and the treatment more likely to succeed. (p. 62)

Amster (1943) had listed and defined six uses of play:

- (a) play can be used for diagnostic understanding of the child,
- (b) play can be used to establish a working relationship, (c) play can be used to break through a child's way of playing in his daily life and his defenses against anxiety, (d) play can be used to help a child verbalize certain conscious material and associated feelings, (e) play can be used to help a child act out unconscious material and to relieve the accompanying

tension, and (f) play can be used to develop a child's play interests which he can carry over into his daily life and which will strengthen him for his future life.

Solomon (1940) summarized the value of play as follows:

(a) it provides a way for the child to release hostility toward parents, siblings, teachers, etc.; (b) it allows the child to rid himself of guilt feelings; (c) it provides an opportunity for the child to express freely all love fantasies; (d) in play the child, through repetition, may become desensitized to certain fears he might have.

Moustakas (1959) believes that,

The child comes into a relationship with the play materials, a relationship which is not unlike the warmth, comfort, and protectiveness he feels when he holds or sleeps with his blanket or some other precious possession. No person can give the child what he experiences in a relationship with a toy or play material. (p. 9)

According to Frank (1955), "in play we observe various themes or schemes in which this child's immediate concerns are focused and more or less symbolically played out" (p. 585). Millar (1968) believes that an aggressive child may improve his behavior through play because feelings, such as anger, which are aroused but denied expression, may be "displaced" onto objects in play or expressed symbolically in play.

According to Muro (1963), a child, through play, can safely express his anger and fears, act silly, be critical or resentful, and in general, have the opportunity to explore himself and his environment to the fullest.

Dinkmeyer and Caldwell (1970) believe that through the

use of play process the counselor can enter the world of the child. Just as an adult may verbally express his feelings and perceptions, the perceptions and feelings of the child are expressed through play. Thus, play allows the counselor to form a closer relationship with the child.

Faust (1963) stated that the term "play process" is "the relationship between the child and the counselor with play as a major vehicle for that relationship, which makes it possible for the child to effect change within himself" (p. 154). The child can translate his wishes, fears, and conflicts into the more comfortable language of play.

Play therapy has been used effectively with emotionally disturbed children as well as disruptive students (Axline, 1947; Baruch, 1952; Ginott, 1961; Moustakas, 1959; Myrick & Haldin, 1971). It has also been used to increase the language, motor, and personal-social skills of mentally retarded children (Newcomer & Morrison, 1974).

Recognizing the benefits of play techniques, this researcher adapted them to developmental group counseling in the elementary school. Using play process in a group setting, the counselor can help children explore and evaluate their feelings, behaviors, and peer relationships. What has been the effect of using play techniques in a group setting?

#### Group Counseling Using Play Process

According to Axline (1947) play in a group setting offers the same benefits as individual play therapy but has some added benefits:

Group therapy is a . . . therapeutic experience with the added element of contemporary evaluation of behavior plus the reaction of personalities upon one another. The group experience injects into therapy a very realistic element because the child lives in a world with other children and must consider the reaction of others and must develop a consideration of other individual's feelings. (p. 25)

Play in groups may be a useful tool for the counselor as it allows children to express themselves and understand others through media that is familiar and comfortable to them. Slavson (1945) stated that the value of using play in a group lies in the fact that the group gives the child an opportunity to relate to others, and helps him break through isolation, ' withdrawal, and aggressive rejection of people. Ginott (1961) believes that "most children, at times in their therapy, should be exposed to peers . . . so that they can test themselves in relation to social actualities" (p. 60).

To support the use of play techniques in group counseling the following studies, some of which directly deal with aggressive children, may be cited.

Clement (1967) used play therapy groups with shy and withdrawn third grade boys and obtained successful results.

A project utilizing play group techniques in public school has been described by Schiffer (1957). It concerned the treatment of emotionally disturbed children who came from a slum area in New York City. A play room was set up in the school building only for the use of the play groups. Schiffer stated, "our experience indicates that therapeutic effects do emerge and many of the children function better in the classroom and



in the neighborhood as a result of their participation in the specialized play group" (p. 193).

Jensen (1958) successfully utilized a combination of play process (music, art, drama, and dance) and interview group counseling with underachieving primary school children in grades two, three, and four. The students were 10 children with normal measured intelligence, but their classroom behavior ranged from silent withdrawal to hyperactive, disruptive participation. It was found that 8 of the 10 children benefited from this program. Axline (1947) also used group play therapy successfully with a group of behavior problem boys in a foster home.

Koenig (1949) chose 10 children from grades three through six for play group counseling because of various problems such as nonconforming classroom behavior, truancy, chronic tardiness, infantile behavior, nervousness, aggressive behavior, emotional disturbances, stealing, and inattention. Significant improvement in 9 of the 10 children was noted.

Roleplaying is one technique used in play process. Cole (1949) used it to desensitize fifth graders to rebuff and discouragement. Bleck, Gumaer, and Loesch (1976), Gumaer, Bleck, and Loesch (1975), and Wells (1962) used roleplaying successfully with elementary school students to deal with normal children exhibiting disruptive, aggressive behavior. The behavior included quarreling over possessions, rivalry for positions in games, fighting, tripping and hitting others, teasing, and interference with each other's classroom activities.

### Summary

The problem of disruptive children in the classroom has plagued educators for many years. Indeed, the questions often asked by teachers to counselors concern discipline in the classroom.

Theorists have debated the cause of disruptive behavior in children, suggesting such behavior occurs due to an instinct or drive, a consequence of frustration, a result of environmental factors, an attempt to reduce tension caused by anger, or a low self-concept. However, no matter what the cause, children do display socially unacceptable behavior.

Children need opportunities to examine, understand, and accept their feelings as well as to discriminate between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Research indicates that a group setting is especially conducive for such an opportunity. Research also indicates that play process may be a technique of great value within the group as a facilitator of communication and understanding. Because group counseling and play techniques are presently among the skills of most elementary school counselors and have been used effectively with children, this study was focused on using structured play within a group setting as a technique to deal with disruptive children.

### CHAPTER III

#### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Since disruptive student behaviors are a problem with which teachers are faced, methods need to be found which will help alleviate these behaviors. Literature on teaching disruptive pupils appropriate self-control is sparse. Regardless of whether disruptive behavior is a result of a drive, frustration, anger, selective reinforcement, modeling, family background, or a low self-concept, it is often detrimental to the learning climate of the classroom. Disruptive students demand excessive teacher time which could be better spent in more productive efforts. Relatedly the disruptive child's problems may be reflected in decreased self-esteem and increased behavioral difficulties in the classroom. Clearly, there is a need for more research concerning the socialization process and appropriate interventions with disruptive children.

This study investigated the effects of a small group counseling unit, the Disruptive Child's Play Group (DCPG). The unit was designed specifically for the child who creates disturbances in the classroom. The DCPG attempted to provide an opportunity for the disruptive child to examine feelings, explore alternative socially acceptable behaviors, and develop enough self-control to decrease the frequency of disruptive behaviors. The techniques used within the group combined the

objectives of developmental group counseling with those of structured play process. Through the use of play in a group setting, it was intended for the children to experience a comfortable and accepting environment.

The hypotheses, population, sampling procedures, experimental design, experimental conditions, and the criterion instruments used in this study are reported in this chapter. The chapter concludes with an explanation of how the data was collected and analyzed.

### Hypotheses

This study focused on eight hypotheses related to disruptive children and their adjustment as effected by, or in the absence of, the DCPG. The following hypotheses were tested:

1. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Classroom Disturbance, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.
2. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Impatience, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.
3. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Disrespect-Defiance, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.
4. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Irrelevant-Responsiveness, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.
5. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding

classroom behavior, as measured by teachers on the Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist.

6. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding self-esteem, as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.
7. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale.

In addition, the following minor hypothesis was tested:

8. There will be no significant differences in the criterion measures on the basis of sex.

### Population and Sampling Procedures

#### Population

The population for this study was students selected from third grade classes in Alachua County schools, Alachua County, Florida. The schools are racially integrated, having a 65 percent white and a 35 percent black population. The proportion of boys and girls in each of 18 schools is about equal (50 percent boys, 50 percent girls). Students in the educable mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed special education classes were excluded due to their exceptionality.

From this group, all third grade teachers from the schools participating in the study were asked to choose six students (three boys and three girls) from their class who they felt exhibited disruptive behaviors. The teachers were given the definitions of disruptive behavior and the disruptive child used in this study to serve as guidelines for their selections (see Appendix A). The children chosen by each third grade

teacher from all the schools in the study made up the population for this study.

### Sampling Procedures

If the third grade teachers at a school chose at least six boys and six girls, then three boys and three girls were randomly assigned to the experimental group and three boys and three girls were randomly assigned to the control group. This was done by randomly numbering the girls and the boys separately and then selecting the first three chosen from a list of random numbers as the experimental group and the next three as the control group for each sex. From these schools, both the experimental and control groups consisted of six children, three boys and three girls.

If in a school there were less than six boys or six girls, the counselor randomly assigned half the boys or girls to the experimental group and half to the control group. The numbers of boys and girls in the experimental and control groups for each school are shown in Table 1. At the end of the study there were actually less than six children in some groups due to children being absent for more than three DCPG sessions, leaving the school, or transferring classes (see Table 1).

\* All 16 elementary school counselors in Alachua County were asked to participate in the study. A total of 13 counselors participated. Each counselor must have met the following standards: (a) certified by the Florida State Education Department as an elementary school counselor; (b) employed as an elementary school counselor in Alachua County; and (c)

Table 1

Number of Boys and Girls in the Experimental and Control Groups for Each School

School	Experi- mental	Control	School	Experi- mental	Control	Group Total
<u>Archer</u>			<u>Lake Forest</u>			
Boys	3	3	Boys	2	2	
Girls	3	3	Girls	2	2	
<u>Metcalfe</u>			<u>P. K. Yonge</u>			
Boys	3	3	Boys	3	1	
Girls	3	2	Girls	1	0	
<u>Rawlings</u>			<u>Shell</u>			
Boys	3	3	Boys	2	1	
Girls	3	3	Girls	2	2	
<u>Glen Springs</u>			<u>J. J. Finley</u>			
Boys	3	3	Boys	4	5	
Girls	3	3	Girls	2	1	
<u>Terwilliger</u>			<u>Kirby Smith</u>			
Boys	3	3	Boys	3	3	
Girls	3	3	Girls	3	3	
<u>Waldo</u>			<u>Alachua</u>			
Boys	3	3	Boys	4	3	
Girls	3	3	Girls	2	2	
<u>Stephen Foster</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>			
Boys	3	3	Boys	39	36	75
Girls	2	3	Girls	32	30	62
			Combined	71	66	137

instructed in the DCPG unit and the procedures for this study.

### The Design of the Study

#### Overview

The experimental design of this study was the randomized pre- and postcontrol group design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). The experiment lasted a total of eight weeks.

#### Procedures

The week before the study began this researcher met with the 13 counselors who volunteered to participate in the study. At this meeting the researcher explained each session of the DCPG, population and sampling procedures, administration and scoring of the instruments, and the time schedule for the study. (See Appendix B for an outline of topics discussed.) At the meeting, the researcher gave each counselor a folder containing the DCPG unit, samples of paper bag puppets and name tags used in the DCPG unit, paper bags to make the puppets, teacher guideline letters (Appendix A), a random number table, a time schedule (Appendix C), and 12 copies of each instrument. The researcher explained each item in the folder and told the counselors they would receive 12 more copies of each instrument during the seventh week of the study.

During the first week of the study each counselor randomly assigned students to experimental and control groups. During the second week, the counselor met with the teachers of the



children in the study to arrange a time for the DCPG group to meet and to collect preassessment data. The counselor at each school asked the teachers to complete the items related to the factors of Classroom Disturbance, Impatience, Disrespect-Defiance, and Irrelevant-Responsiveness on the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale. In addition, these teachers were asked to complete the Walker Problem Identification Checklist for the same children. The counselors then scored the instruments and returned them to this researcher.

Also during the second week the counselor at each school gave the students in both the experimental and control groups an overview of the study. The children then completed the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale which were used for preassessment data. The counselor sent these instruments to this researcher for scoring.

During the third, and through the seventh week, the experimental group received the DCPG treatment. The treatment consisted of two 30 to 45-minute DCPG sessions per week. Any child who missed three or more sessions of the DCPG was dropped from the study. During this time the control group received no treatment. The control group remained in their regular classroom during this study but will be given the DCPG group experience in the future.

The eighth week was used for postassessment. During this week the teachers and students of the experimental and control groups again completed the same criterion instruments administered during the second week. The counselors scored the instruments and sent them to this researcher.

During the eight weeks of the study, the researcher monitored the counselors by calling each counselor. By using a checklist (Appendix D), the researcher kept a record of each counselor's progress.

### The Disruptive Child's Play Group

The Disruptive Child's Play Group (Appendix E) is patterned after the Cross and Robinson (1973) model for structured group experiences with some variations. According to Cross and Robinson (1973), structured group experiences consist of a series of 6 to 10 group meetings of six to eight students. The DCPG consists of ten 30 to 45-minute sessions for a group of six members.

Cross and Robinson (1973) proposed a three-stage sequence for structured group experiences. Their first stage focuses on group interaction and self-disclosure designed to increase group trust, group cohesiveness, awareness of self and others, and awareness and understanding of feelings. Sessions 1, 2, and 3 of the DCPG unit are modeled after this stage.

The second stage of the sequence begins to involve group members to a greater degree with each other, focusing on feedback in some way. The third stage is flexible according to the chosen focus of the group. The final session of this stage involves a strength bombardment activity which provides an opportunity for students to give positive feedback to each other (Cross & Robinson, 1973).

The DCPG sessions reverse the sequence of stage two and

three and conclude with a strength bombardment activity. Sessions 4 through 8 of the DCPG unit are modeled after stage three, focusing on disruptive behavior and related feelings, alternatives, and consequences. Sessions 9 and 10 of the DCPG unit are modeled after stage two in that group members give feedback to each other. Session 10 is the strength bombardment session. In these two sessions, group members develop self-acceptance and a feeling of being worthwhile by receiving positive feedback.

The specific activities used in each session of the DCPG unit were chosen for three reasons: (a) they include play, (b) they fit into the Cross and Robinson (1973) structured group experience model, and (c) they were used previous to this study by this researcher in his experience as an elementary school counselor.

#### Goals of the DCPG Unit

The main goals of the group are to help children as follows:

1. decrease the frequency of disruptive behavior in school,
2. clarify and accept their feelings,
3. demonstrate consideration of other's feelings and needs,
4. investigate and use alternative socially acceptable coping behaviors, and
5. improve peer and teacher relationships.

## Objectives of the DCPG Sessions

The specific objectives of the DCPG sessions are outlined below.

### Session 1--Orientation and Clay Modeling

- Focus: a) get acquainted  
b) discuss rules for group participation  
c) self-disclosure through clay modeling

### Session 2--Review and Animal Drawings

- Focus: a) review rules for group participation  
b) self-disclosure through animal drawings

### Session 3--Feelings Games

- Focus: a) remembering what others shared  
b) become aware of feelings  
c) act out feelings

### Session 4--Picture Painting

- Focus: a) self-disclosure through painting  
(behavior related)

### Session 5--Roleplaying

- Focus: a) roleplay potentially disruptive behavior situations  
b) discuss feelings evoked by each situation  
c) roleplay alternative responses and discuss consequences of each alternative

### Session 6--Making Puppets

- Focus: a) make "teacher and student" puppets

### Session 7--Puppetplay

- Focus: a) develop a list of problem situations at school  
b) dramatize situations through puppetplay  
c) dramatize alternative responses and discuss consequences of each

### Session 8--Puzzle Experience

- Focus: a) participate in a puzzle experience designed to stress the importance of cooperation

### Session 9--Clay Modeling

- Focus: a) give personal feedback to each other through clay gifts

### Session 10--Strength Bombardment

- Focus: a) give and receive positive feedback

### Criterion Instruments

This study included four criterion measures. The Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale and the Walker Problem Identification Checklist were administered to the teachers. The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale were administered to the students.

#### Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale

The Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale (DESB) is a rating form filled out by teachers and measures overt behavior related to classroom achievement. This instrument was developed by Spivak and Swift (1967). The instrument contains 47 items which are categorized into 11 factors, 4 of which were used in this study. These 4 factors were Classroom Disturbance, Impatience, Disrespect-Defiance, and Irrelevant-Responsiveness.

#### Classroom Disturbance

The Classroom Disturbance factor items measure the extent to which the child's behavior is active, social (although inappropriate), and disruptive. This factor includes 4 items, 3 of which are scored on a frequency scale and 1 on an intensity scale. A test-retest reliability coefficient of .91 has been reported for this factor (Spivak & Swift, 1967). This was based on 128 students with a one-week interval between administrations. Reliability coefficients on the other factors were based on these same students and obtained in the same manner.

#### Impatience

The Impatience factor items measure the child's lack of

drive to enter into and complete assigned work. This factor includes 4 items, 1 of which is scored on a frequency scale and 3 on an intensity scale. The test-retest correlation coefficient for this factor was .88.

#### Disrespect-Defiance

The Disrespect-Defiance factor items measure the extent to which the child shows open disrespect for the school, subjects, or teacher. This factor includes 4 items scored on a frequency scale. The test-retest correlation coefficient for this factor was .87.

#### Irrelevant-Responsiveness

The Irrelevant-Responsiveness factor items measure the extent to which the child's verbal responses in class are irrelevant, intrusive, and/or exaggerated or untruthful. This factor includes 4 items scored on a frequency scale. The test-retest correlation coefficient for this factor was .88.

This experimenter chose to have teachers rate only the 16 items related to the above factors, since it was felt that they were the most relevant to the study.

Raw scores on each factor are converted into standard score units. Standard scores are then plotted on a child's profile, indicating whether the student is in the average range or whether he or she exhibits more of a disruptive influence.

In terms of validity, Spivak and Swift (1967) mentioned that the experience of teachers and the knowledge of educational and research psychologists were combined to identify problem behaviors that interfere with academic achievement.

They further explained that there have been four studies dealing with teacher conferences for selection of behaviors. These studies included factor analyses of rated behaviors and studies of the relationship between the items (and/or factors) on the scale and age, sex, IQ, clinical diagnosis, academic subject, grade level, sex of teacher rater, age and educational level of parents, and sibling status of child. Norms and test-retest reliabilities have been obtained and profiles of academic achievers and underachievers reported. These studies used data from public schools and special classes in public and residential school settings. In all, 147 teachers were involved and made 1,719 ratings of 1,546 children. The final behavior factors emerged from studies of both normal and special class children and related to academic achievement in both types of classes (Spivak & Swift, 1967).

#### Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist

The Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist (WPBIC) is a behavior checklist which is filled out by teachers and used for the identification of children with behavior problems. It was developed by Walker (1970). The checklist is designed for use in elementary schools and is standardized for grades four, five, and six. It consists of observable, operational statements about classroom behavior which were supplied by a representative sample of elementary school teachers.

The instrument consists of 50 items which describe behaviors that interfere with successful performance in the classroom. Each item was assigned a score weight in terms of how much

influence the item had in handicapping a given child's adjustment. This was accomplished by having five judges rate each item's influence on a 20-point scale ranging from "of no importance" to "great importance." The scale was on a continuum and the judges could rate an item at any given point. The judges' item ratings were pooled and averaged. Each item was given an arbitrary score weight ranging from 4 to 1 based on such ratings. Since the inter-judge reliability correlation was .83, the means of the judges on all items were pooled and assigned as score weights for the scale items. With this weighting system, a child can receive a high score of 100 and a low score of 0.

The reliability of the WPBIC was determined by the Kuder-Richardson split-half method. The split-half coefficient obtained on the instrument was .98 (Walker, 1970).

Four types of validity have been obtained on the WPBIC. One type of validity estimated was contrasted groups validity. In this method of assessing validity two independent groups were defined in relation to the construct being measured and the instrument was then given to both groups. Differences between the two groups in instrument score were then tested for significance (Walker, 1970). Two groups were defined in relation to the construct of behavior disturbance. Matched were 38 subjects with 38 from the 534 children not so identified in terms of age, grade, and sex. A difference between the experimental group and control subjects was significant beyond the .001 level. Contrasted groups validity can be



claimed for the WPBIC since the behaviorally disturbed students received significantly higher scores on the construct which is measured by the instrument than did the nondisturbed subjects (Walker, 1970).

In terms of criterion or predictive validity, the criterion was referral to psychiatric or clinical facilities or those requiring special education classes because of behavior problems. The biserial correlation between checklist scores and the criterion was .68.

Factorial validity was also obtained. A total of five factors were found: (a) Acting out, (b) Withdrawal, (c) Distractability, (d) Disturbed Peer Relations, and (e) Immaturity. After subjecting the factors to a Varimax Orthogonal rotation, it was found that the factors were relatively independent of one another. This suggests that separate functions of the same behavior domain (behavior disturbance) are measured.

A correlation coefficient between each item and the total score was computed. Validity of the 50 items range from .03 to .67. Overall, the validity indices indicate that each of the items correlate to a high degree with the criterion (total score). In addition, the item validities further suggest that the items on the checklist constitute a homogeneous, related set of behaviors with the exception of items 33, 36, and 47 which have indices of .10, .10, and .03 respectively.

#### Self-Esteem Inventory

The Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) was developed by Cooper-smith (1967). There are 58 items on the scale which are

suitable for children eight to ten years of age. The alternative responses to each of the 58 items are "Like me" or "Unlike me."

The SEI is a self-report instrument consisting of five subscales: (a) General Self, (b) Social Self-Peers, (c) Home-Parents, (d) Lie Scale, and (e) School-Academic. A total score is obtained by multiplying the appropriate responses on all the scales by two, except the Lie Scale. One hundred is the highest possible score.

A test-retest reliability coefficient of .88 was obtained for the SEI over a five-week period with a sample of 30 fifth grade children. A test-retest coefficient of .70 was obtained after a three-year period with a sample of 56 children (Coopersmith, 1967).

Content validity for the instrument was obtained by having five psychologists sort the items into a high self-esteem group or a low self-esteem group.

#### Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale

The Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale (DBRS) was developed by this researcher (see Appendix F) and is a modification of an instrument developed by Loesch, Myrick, and Cross (1975). It is a 12-item rating scale of student perceptions of their own behavior. The child reports the perceived frequency of a behavior by rating each of the 12 items on a Likert-type scale of rarely, sometimes, often, and almost always. Of the 12 items, 3 are worded in the positive while 9 are worded in the negative. For the positively worded items, 1 point is assigned for a

response of rarely, 2 for sometimes, 3 for often, and 4 for almost always. For the negative worded items the point values are assigned in the reverse order: 4 for rarely, 3 for sometimes, 2 for often, and 1 for almost always. In this manner the maximum score is 48 and the minimum score is 12 (range of 36). The instructions and the 12 items were read aloud to the children.

A test-retest reliability measure was taken of the instrument and a product moment correlation of .93 was obtained. This was accomplished through two administrations of the instrument to 17 students within a nine-day interval.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of a developmentally based group counseling unit, the Disruptive Child's Play Group (DCPG). The unit utilized structured play process with third grade children who were identified as disruptive in the classroom. Using randomization and a pre- and postcontrol group design, each counselor monitored a total of seven dependent variables for both boys and girls in the DCPG and the control groups. This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected from these criteria measures as related to the eight hypotheses that were investigated in this study.

A multiple regression analysis was used to determine the effects of the two independent variables (group and sex of subject) on each of the seven dependent variables. This analysis enabled the experimenter to test the equality of the means, the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables, and the interaction effects. The level of confidence used in this study was the .05 level. The different N's for each variable are due to missing data.

#### Hypothesis One: Classroom Disturbance

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding

the variable of Classroom Disturbance, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale. An inspection of Table 2 indicates that subjects who received the DCPG had a lower mean gain score on the Classroom Disturbance factor (-1.761) than the subjects in the control group (-1.415). A lower score on this factor is indicative of more positive behavior in the classroom. Therefore, the DCPG group showed more improvement than the control group.

However, the analysis of variance data reported in Table 3 indicates no statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. There also were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Each of the F values was lower than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence ( $\approx 3.91$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis One was not rejected.

#### Hypothesis Two: Impatience

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Impatience, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale. An inspection of Table 4 indicates that the subjects who received the DCPG had a lower mean gain score on the Impatience factor (-2.143) than the subjects in the control group (-1.469). A lower score on this factor is also indicative of more patient behavior in the classroom. Thus, the DCPG group showed more improvement than the control group.

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviation for the Gain Scores on the  
Classroom Disturbance Factor of the Devereux  
Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale

Experimental (N=71)		Control (N=65)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
-1.761	3.556	-1.415	3.570

Table 3

Summary Table for Analysis of Variance for the Classroom  
Disturbance Factor of the Devereux Elementary School  
Behavior Rating Scale by Group and Sex

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	1.10	1.10	0.09
Sex	1	0.01	0.01	0.0008
Interaction	1	3.69	3.69	0.31
Residual	121	1438.78	11.89	

However, the analysis of variance data reported in Table 5 again indicates no statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. There also were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Each of the F values was lower than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence ( $\approx 3.91$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis Two was not rejected.

### Hypothesis Three: Disrespect-Defiance

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Disrespect-Defiance, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale. Table 6 indicates that subjects who received the DCPG had a lower mean gain score on the Disrespect-Defiance factor (-2.718) than the subjects in the control group (-0.600). A lower score on this factor is indicative of more positive behavior in the classroom. Therefore, the DCPG group showed a great deal more improvement than the control group.

The analysis of variance data reported in Table 7 indicates a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. The F value (7.05) was higher than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence ( $\approx 3.91$ ). The F value obtained also was higher than the F statistic needed for significance at the .01 level of confidence ( $\approx 6.84$ ). There were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Hypothesis Three was rejected.

Table 4

Mean and Standard Deviation for the Gain Scores on the  
 Impatience Factor of the Devereux Elementary School  
 Behavior Rating Scale

Experimental (N=70)		Control (N=64)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
-2.143	5.578	-1.469	3.473

Table 5

Summary Table for Analysis of Variance for the Impatience  
 Factor of the Devereux Elementary School Behavior  
 Rating Scale by Group and Sex

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	15.31	15.31	0.69
Sex	1	37.40	37.40	1.68
Interaction	1	0.17	0.17	0.007
Residual	121	2697.56	22.29	



Table 6

Mean and Standard Deviation for the Gain Scores on the  
Disrespect-Defiance Factor of the Devereux  
Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale

Experimental (N=71)		Control (N=65)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
-2.718	4.838	-0.600	4.026

Table 7

Summary Table for Analysis of Variance for the Disrespect-  
Defiance Factor of the Devereux Elementary School  
Behavior Rating Scale by Group and Sex

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	142.33	142.33	7.05*
Sex	1	36.18	36.18	1.79
Interaction	1	15.07	15.07	0.74
Residual	121	2444.45	20.20	

\*  $p < .05$  (also  $p < .01$ )

#### Hypothesis Four: Irrelevant-Responsiveness

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Irrelevant-Responsiveness, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale. An inspection of Table 8 indicates that subjects who received the DCPG had a lower mean gain score on the Irrelevant-Responsiveness factor (-1.620) than the subjects in the control group (-0.923). A lower score on this factor is indicative of more on-tasks behavior in the classroom. Therefore, the DCPG group showed more improvement than the control group.

However, the analysis of variance data reported in Table 9 indicates no statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. There were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Each of the F values was lower than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence ( $\approx 3.91$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis Four was not rejected.

#### Hypothesis Five: Problem Behavior

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by teachers on the Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist. Table 10 indicates that subjects who received the DCPG had a lower mean gain score on the Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist (-6.775) than the subjects in the control group (-4.656).

Table 8

Mean and Standard Deviation for the Gain Scores on the  
Irrelevant-Responsiveness Factor of the Devereux  
Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale

Experimental (N=71)		Control (N=65)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
-1.620	2.978	-0.923	3.801

Table 9

Summary Table for Analysis of Variance for the Irrelevant-  
Responsiveness Factor of the Devereux Elementary School  
Behavior Rating Scale by Group and Sex

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	15.86	15.86	1.36
Sex	1	11.72	11.72	1.00
Interaction	1	0.04	0.04	0.003
Residual	121	1414.36	11.69	

A lower score on this instrument is indicative of less problem behavior in the classroom. Thus, the DCPG group showed more improvement than the control group.

However, the analysis of variance data reported in Table 11 indicates no statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. There were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Each of the F values was lower than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence ( $\approx 3.91$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis Five was not rejected.

#### Hypothesis Six: Self-Esteem

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding self-esteem, as measured by students on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. An inspection of Table 12 indicates that subjects who received the DCPG had a higher mean gain score on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (8.030) than the subjects in the control group (-3.651). A higher score on this instrument is indicative of greater self-esteem. Therefore, the DCPG group showed more improvement in self-esteem than the control group.

The analysis of variance data reported in Table 13 indicates a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. The F value (15.71) was higher than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence ( $\approx 3.91$ ). The F value obtained also was

Table 10

Mean and Standard Deviation for the Gain Scores on the  
Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist

Experimental (N=71)		Control (N=64)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
-6.775	13.811	-4.656	12.887

Table 11

Summary Table for Analysis of Variance for the Walker Problem  
Behavior Identification Checklist by Group and Sex

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	182.85	182.85	1.01
Sex	1	85.73	85.73	0.47
Interaction	1	22.83	22.83	0.13
Residual	121	21849.84	180.58	

Table 12

Mean and Standard Deviation for the Gain Scores on the  
Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory

Experimental (N=67)		Control (N=63)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
8.030	16.688	-3.651	15.136

Table 13

Summary Table for Analysis of Variance for the Coopersmith  
Self-Esteem Inventory by Group and Sex

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	4168.55	4168.55	15.71*
Sex	1	3.61	3.61	0.01
Interaction	1	0.16	0.16	0.0006
Residual	121	32099.69	265.29	

\* $p < .05$  (also  $p < .01$ )

higher than the F statistic needed for significance at the .01 level of confidence ( $\approx 6.84$ ). There were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Hypothesis Six was rejected.

#### Hypothesis Seven: Disruptive Behavior

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by students on the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale. Table 14 indicates that subjects who received the DCPG had a higher mean gain score on the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale (2.929) than the subjects in the control group (1.032). A higher score on this instrument is indicative of more positive behavior. Therefore, the DCPG group had more positive perceptions of their own behavior than the control group.

The analysis of variance data reported in Table 15 does not indicate a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. There were no statistically significant interaction effects between group and sex. Each of the F values was lower than the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence ( $\approx 3.91$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis Seven was not rejected.

#### Hypothesis Eight: Sex Differences

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant differences between the sex of subjects in the DCPG and control

Table 14

Mean and Standard Deviation for the Gain Scores on the  
Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale

Experimental (N=70)		Control (N=63)	
Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
2.929	6.678	1.032	7.157

Table 15

Summary Table for Analysis of Variance for the Disruptive  
Behavior Rating Scale by Group and Sex

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value
Group	1	117.10	117.10	2.34
Sex	1	48.00	48.00	0.96
Interaction	1	42.79	42.79	0.86
Residual	121	6052.82	50.02	



groups as measured by the seven dependent variables. An examination of Table 16 indicates that females had a higher mean gain score on the Classroom Disturbance and Disrespect-Defiance factors, as well as on the WPBIC. On the other four dependent variables the males had higher mean gain scores. Thus, it appears that males and females scored approximately equal.

Table 16  
Means for the Gain Scores by Sex of Subject

Variable	Male		Female	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Classroom Disturbance	74	-1.62	61	-1.56
Impatience	73	-1.45	61	-2.26
Disrespect- Defiance	74	-2.16	62	-1.16
Irrelevant- Responsiveness	74	-1.05	62	-1.56
WPBIC	75	-6.24	60	-5.18
SEI	71	2.68	59	2.00
DBRS	71	2.72	62	1.24

Thus previous analysis of variance data presented on Tables 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15 indicates no statistically significant differences between sexes on the seven dependent variables. None of these F values exceeded the F statistic needed for significance at the .05 level of confidence ( $\approx 3.91$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis Eight was not rejected.

### Summary of Results

The DCPG group scored more positively on all dependent variables than did the control group. Statistically significant differences at the .05 level of confidence were found on the Disrespect-Defiance factor of the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale and on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. No statistically significant differences were found between experimental and control groups on the other five dependent variables. No significant differences were found between sexes on any of the dependent variables. No significant interaction effects between group (experimental-control) and sex (female-male) were found on any of the seven dependent variables.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### Research Summary

The purpose of this study was to measure the therapeutic effectiveness of a developmentally based group counseling unit, the Disruptive Child's Play Group (DCPG) on third grade children who were exhibiting disruptive behavior in the classroom. Specifically the study examined eight hypotheses regarding the subjects' classroom behavior and self-esteem.

Disruptive third graders were selected from 13 schools in Alachua County, Florida. From this group an experimental group (N=71) and a control group (N=66) were randomly selected from a separate list of boys and girls for each school. There were 62 girls and 75 boys in the research.

The study lasted a total of eight weeks. During the first week, the counselor from each of the 13 schools randomly assigned students to experimental and control groups. During the second week, each counselor collected preassessment data. The teachers of children in the study were asked to complete the items related to four factors of the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale and the entire Walker Behavior Problem Identification Checklist. The subjects completed the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale.

Over the next five weeks the treatment, the DCPG, was led by the elementary counselor in each school. The control group received no treatment during that time. During the eighth week, the same criterion measures as in the preassessment were administered for postassessment.

The data collected were analyzed by multiple regression analyses to determine the effects of the two independent variables (group and sex of subject) on each of the dependent variable measures. These data related directly to the following hypotheses:

1. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Classroom Disturbance, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.

The analysis of variance comparing the mean gain scores of the experimental and control groups indicated no statistically significant differences at the .05 level of confidence.

Hypothesis One was not rejected.

2. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Impatience, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.

The analysis of variance indicated no statistically significant differences between the mean gain scores of the experimental and control groups at the .05 level of confidence. Hypothesis Two was not rejected.

3. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Disrespect-Defiance, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.

The analysis of variance comparing the mean gain scores of

the experimental and control groups indicated a statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. Hypothesis Three was rejected.

4. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding the variable of Irrelevant-Responsiveness, as measured by the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale.

The analysis of variance comparing the mean gain scores of the experimental and control groups indicated no statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. Hypothesis Four was not rejected.

5. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by teachers on the Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist.

The analysis of variance comparing the mean gain scores of the experimental and control groups indicated no statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. Hypothesis Five was not rejected.

6. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding self-esteem, as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.

The analysis of variance comparing the mean gain scores of the experimental and control groups indicated a statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. Hypothesis Six was rejected.

7. There will be no significant difference between the DCPG group and the control group regarding classroom behavior, as measured by the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale.

The analysis of variance comparing the mean gain scores of the experimental and control groups indicated no statistically

significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. Hypothesis Seven was not rejected.

8. There will be no significant differences in the criterion measures on the basis of sex.

The analysis of variance comparing the mean gain scores of boys and girls on the dependent variables indicated no statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. Hypothesis Eight was not rejected.

### Discussion of Results

Two statistically significant results which may have far-reaching implications for students, teachers, and school counselors were obtained in this study.

There was a significant difference in the mean gain scores between the experimental and control groups on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. Both boys and girls in the experimental group improved their self-concept significantly.

The DCPG was not specifically designed to increase self-concept yet this was a significant result. Perhaps this result was due to the DCPG's focus on understanding and accepting feelings. According to Wittmer and Myrick (1974), as a child is made aware of his own and other people's feelings, he tends to become less guilty, less afraid, and less anxious about his feelings. Therefore, he does not have to deny an important part of himself and increase in self-concept may result.

Another possibility is that the group experience itself, rather than the actual activities, caused the increase in self-

concept. It may be that the peer interaction in a nonthreatening environment provided the opportunity for positive growth. Perhaps it was the special attention the experimental group was receiving from the counselor that caused improvement. In a replication of this study, the addition of a placebo group that would spend time with the counselor but would not receive structured treatment would test the possibility of this explanation.

This result is important since there is a substantial amount of evidence which indicates that children with more positive self-concepts are less anxious, better adjusted, more popular, more effective, more honest, and less defensive than children with lower self-concepts (McCandless, 1961). A study by Coopersmith (1959) with fifth and sixth grade children indicated a correlation of .36 between a positive self-concept and school adjustment. Children who received the DCPG treatment improved their self-concepts thereby opening the door toward greater school and social adjustment.

There also was a significant difference in the mean gain scores between the experimental and control groups on the Disrespect-Defiance factor of the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale. Both the boys and the girls in the experimental group improved significantly. The items in this factor measure the extent to which a child exhibits open disrespect for or resistance to the school, the subject matter being taught, and the teacher. This kind of behavior directly relates to disruptive behavior as described in this study.

Therefore, it appears that the DCPG did facilitate some positive behavior in the classroom.

The two significant results stated above could possibly be related. As previously stated, a positive self-concept may lead to more positive behaviors within the classroom. In this study, the DCPG facilitated improvement in the children's self-concepts which, in turn, may have facilitated the reduction of their disrespectful and defiant attitudes toward school. More research is needed to determine whether the DCPG treatment or the improvement in self-concept actually caused the more positive classroom behaviors.

The main goal of the DCPG was to decrease disruptive behaviors in the classroom. Statistically significant results were obtained only on the Disrespect-Defiance scale of the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale. Other types of disruptive behavior such as hitting, fighting, teasing, etc. did not decrease significantly. However, there was a noted trend of improvement (i.e., less disruptive) of the DCPG group for all such behaviors as measured by the criterion instruments.

Since a positive trend was noted, perhaps some modifications of the DCPG would lead to statistically significant results. Such modifications may include increasing the number of sessions, increasing the number of sessions per week, and/or increasing the amount of time per session.

Another possible explanation for the lack of decrease in disruptive behaviors may be counselor ineffectiveness. Such ineffectiveness may be the result of the counselor's lack of



skill, enthusiasm, and/or preparation for the sessions. Perhaps additional training sessions before starting the DCPG would help eliminate these problems.

It also was difficult to be sure whether counselors administered the instruments as they were instructed to by this researcher. The counselors were told to read each item of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale to each child to insure that the child understood what was being asked. The counselors also were asked to explain the Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale and the Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist to the teachers. The counselors were asked to check the instruments to make sure teachers and students correctly marked all the items of their respective instruments. In a few cases this procedure was not completely followed. Some students and teachers left out items which therefore had to be recorded as missing data. Since this researcher could not have been on hand to help administer the instruments at each school, he is not certain that all the counselors read the items to the children.

A replication of this study with other modifications might be worthwhile. Since students' self-esteem was enhanced and their defiance and hostility toward school reduced, it would be interesting to include academic performance as a dependent variable.

It also would be valuable to do a follow-up study at various time intervals after completion of the DCPG. Perhaps

by administering the instruments a month after and then six months after the DCPG treatment, it would be possible to determine whether there are long-term effects of the unit. In order for such a follow-up to be done it would be necessary to start the study toward the beginning of the school year.

This study was done with disruptive third grade children. The study should be replicated using other elementary grade children to determine if positive results can be obtained with other grades. In addition, it is possible that structured play process, as used in the DCPG, can be effective with other target populations such as children from divorced homes, shy children, or low academic achievers.

The results of this study imply that counselors using structured play process can have some positive effects on the attitudes of disruptive children. However, the DCPG, in its present form, did not significantly reduce disruptive behavior. Perhaps with modification of the unit a decrease in disruptive behaviors would be achieved. The DCPG does, in its present form, significantly increase self-concepts in disruptive children. Such a change in self-concept may be the first step toward improving classroom behavior.

APPENDIX A  
TEACHER GUIDELINE LETTER

January 10, 1977

Dear Third Grade Teacher,

During the next few weeks the elementary guidance counselor in your school will be offering a structured group counseling unit for disruptive children. This program is part of a research study on group counseling with elementary school disruptive children.

Your counselor will need your help in selecting the children to participate in the group and to fill out pre- and post-data for the children selected. Please submit the names of six children in your class (3 boys and 3 girls) who you feel exhibit the most disruptive behavior. By disruptive behavior, it is meant behavior which is socially unacceptable in a classroom such as shouting, hitting, teasing, tripping others, kicking, running around, throwing objects, disturbing others, hurting others' feelings, and verbal abuse. Be sure to choose your most disruptive children, children who exhibit this kind of behavior most frequently.

Sincerely,

Robert T. Bleck  
Elementary Guidance Counselor  
Littlewood Elementary School

\*\*\*\*\*

Teacher:

The children I have selected are:

Girls

Boys

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### OUTLINE OF TOPICS COVERED AT PRELIMINARY COUNSELOR MEETING

The following topics were covered by the researcher at a meeting held on January 6, 1977, the week before this study began. The purpose of this meeting was to explain the study to the participating counselors.

- I. Brief introduction to the study and explanation of its purpose.
- II. Counselors check their folders for the following materials:
  - A. Sample paper bag puppet
  - B. Plain paper bags (10)
  - C. Sample name tag
  - D. Teacher guideline letters (6 copies)
  - E. Random number table
  - F. DCPG unit
  - G. Disruptive Behavior Rating Scale (12 copies)
  - H. Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (12 copies)
  - I. Walker Problem Behavior Identification Checklist (12 copies)
  - J. Devereux Elementary School Behavior Rating Scale (12 copies)
  - K. Time schedule
- III. Explanation of the population and sample selection procedures.
  - A. Counselors should give each third grade teacher in their school a copy of the teacher guideline letter and explain it to them.

1. Counselors should tell teachers not to choose educable mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed special education students.
  - B. Counselors should use random number table to randomly assign students to control and experimental groups.
  - C. Counselors should send teacher guideline letters back to researcher, making sure the name of their school is on the envelope.
- IV. Explanation of each session of the DCPG unit.
- V. Explanation of the administration and scoring of the instruments for both pre- and postassessment data.
- A. Counselors were told they would be given copies of the instruments for the postassessment during the seventh week of the study.
  - B. Counselors should send the instruments to the researcher in an envelope with the name of their school on it after they finish scoring the instruments.
- VI. Explanation of monitoring process.
- A. Counselors were told that the researcher would call them on the telephone or visit them if necessary once a week to discuss their progress in the study.
- VII. Explanation of the time schedule for the study.

## APPENDIX C

### SCHEDULE FOR THE DCPG RESEARCH STUDY

It is important to the validity of this study as well as helpful to the researcher to maintain the same time schedule in each school. In order to do this a schedule is provided here. Your cooperation in following this schedule as closely as possible will be greatly appreciated.

January 7 or January 10:

Give out and explain teacher letter.

January 11 through January 14:

Week 1--Population and sampling procedures.

January 16 through January 21:

Week 2--Arrange a time for DCPG group to meet.

Collect and score preassessment instruments.

Send preassessment data to researcher.

January 24 through January 28:

Week 3--Sessions 1 and 2 of the DCPG.

January 31 through February 4:

Week 4--Sessions 3 and 4 of the DCPG.

February 7 through February 11:

Week 5--Sessions 5 and 6 of the DCPG.

February 14 through February 18:

Week 6--Sessions 7 and 8 of the DCPG.

February 21 through February 25:

Week 7--Sessions 9 and 10 of the DCPG.

February 28 through March 4:

Week 8--Administer and score postassessment instruments.

Send postassessment instruments to researcher.

**\*\*Please note:** There is no school for students on January 24 and February 21. If you have a session scheduled for those days you will need to reschedule it.

# APPENDIX D

## CHECKLIST FOR MONITORING COUNSELOR PROGRESS IN DISRUPTIVE CHILD'S PLAY GROUP SESSIONS

	Session									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Counselor's name										
Phone number										
Counselor's name										
Phone number										
Counselor's name										
Phone number										
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APPENDIX E  
THE DISRUPTIVE CHILD'S PLAY GROUP

Robert T. Bleck  
Littlewood Elementary

Goals:

1. Help the child to decrease the frequency of disruptive school behavior.
2. Help the child to clarify and accept feelings.
3. Help the child to demonstrate consideration of other's feelings and needs.
4. Assist the child to investigate socially acceptable coping behaviors.
5. Help the child to improve peer and teacher relationships.

Session I

Objectives:

1. The children will learn the names of all other members of the group.
2. The group will discuss cooperatively some rules for group discussion.
3. The children will model from clay something they have that means a great deal to them.
4. The children will share their clay models with the group.

Materials: A large fistful of clay for each child, chart paper or poster board, and a magic marker.

Activities:

1. Name Game. The counselor asks, "Is there anyone in the group who can name everyone else?" All those who wish to try are given the opportunity. The counselor also tries to name every child. If anyone can name all the first names he or she is then asked to name all the surnames.



2. Discussion rules. The counselor says, "Knowing each other's names is just the first step for working well in groups. Sometimes people have trouble working in groups if they don't agree on some basic rules. What are some easy rules that might help our discussions to be better?" The counselor should elicit the following basic rules from the group:

- (a) One person speaks at a time
- (b) Raise your hand if you wish to speak
- (c) Anything said is O.K.
- (d) Listen to and think about what others say
- (e) Anything said in the group is private for the group only

As the group decides on the rules, the counselor writes them on a chart which will be hung up for the remainder of the sessions to remind the children of the rules.

3. Clay modeling. The counselor explains, "We are just beginning to get to know each other. There are some things we can see about each other; for example, the way we dress, the color of our eyes, and how we wear our hair. However, we all have information about ourselves that maybe only a few people know. A good way to learn about each other is to share some of this information." The counselor passes out clay to each child while giving the following directions: "I'm giving each of you some clay and I would like you to make something that you have that means a great deal to you. I might make my baseball glove because I have played many good baseball games with it. Someone else might make their favorite doll. Try to think of something you have that really means a lot to you and make it out of clay." When everyone is finished, the counselor encourages the group members to share what they have made and give reasons for their selection. Similarities and differences in choices are pointed out.

## Session II

### Objectives:

1. The children will review the rules for group discussion.
2. The children will have the opportunity to self-disclose more of themselves by drawing an animal that is most like themselves and sharing it with the group.

Materials: Paper and crayons.

Activities:

1. Review of rules. The counselor hides the rule chart from Session I so the children may not see it. The counselor begins by saying, "Let's see how good your memories are. Last session we came up with some rules for good group discussions. Would someone tell us one." The counselor gives group members a chance to tell all the rules from Session I. Then the counselor says, "You have such good memories! I'm going to put our rule chart back on the wall so you may look at it if you have trouble remembering a rule later on."
2. Animal drawings. The counselor introduces this activity by saying, "Last session we began getting to know each other by sharing clay models of something we have that means a lot to us. Today we are going to learn more about each other. I'm going to hand out a piece of paper and some crayons. I would like you to put your name on the paper and draw one animal that you feel is most like you. For example, I might draw a lion because when I get angry I growl at people. Someone else I knew drew a bear because he was very lazy and liked to sleep. Another person I knew drew a mouse because she loved to eat cheese. Other people drew deer because they were as gentle as little deer. Remember, try to think of an animal that is most like you." When everyone finishes their drawing the counselor encourages group members to share their animals. Similarities and differences are pointed out.

Session IIIObjectives:

1. Each child will tell at least one thing he learned about someone else in the group.
2. The group will cooperatively write two lists of feelings words, one of pleasant feelings and the other unpleasant feelings.
3. Each child will choose a feeling word from the lists and act it out in a game of charades.

Materials: Chalkboard or chart paper and a magic marker.

Activities:

1. What have we learned. The counselor says, "We have learned some new things about each other. Who would like to tell us one new thing they learned about

someone in this group." Each child who wishes to, states at least one new thing he learned about another group member.

2. Feeling words. The counselor continues, "Another way to understand ourselves and others is to understand and share our feelings. Now, we are going to list as many feelings as we can think of. We'll make two lists, one for pleasant feelings and one for unpleasant feelings. Let's list as many as we can." As the children name a feeling, the counselor uses the blackboard or chart paper to write the feeling on the appropriate list. If the children are having difficulty listing feelings, the counselor may ask questions such as, "How do you feel on your birthday? How do you feel when you are losing a game?"
3. Feelings charade. After the children list as many feelings as they can, the counselor says, "I want a volunteer to choose a feeling from either list, whisper it to me, and act out what you would do and how you would look if you were feeling that feeling. The other members of the group will try to guess which feeling you are acting out. Who would like to be first?" If the children are hesitant, the counselor might act out a feeling for them first to demonstrate. Each child who wants to should be given the opportunity to act out a feeling.

#### Session IV

##### Objectives:

1. The children will paint a picture showing a time they were in an argument or fight at school.
2. The children will paint a picture showing a time their teacher was mad at them or punished them.
3. The children will share and discuss their pictures with the group.

Materials: Paper, paint, paintbrushes.

##### Activities:

1. Picture painting. The counselor gives each child two pieces of paper, paint, and paintbrushes. The counselor says, "Today I'd like everyone to paint two pictures. The first one should be a picture of a time you were in an argument or fight at school. The second one should be a picture of a

time your teacher was mad at you or punished you. You will have 10 minutes to do your paintings. You may begin now." The counselor should encourage the children as they paint.

After everyone cleans up the counselor says, "We would all like to see each others' paintings, so let's take turns showing our pictures and telling about them." Each child should explain the incident he has painted while holding his painting so others can see it. The counselor should ask the children such questions as:

- 1) Why did you get into that fight or argument?
- 2) How did you feel when the fight or argument was over?
- 3) What could you have done to have avoided the fight or argument?
- 4) Why was your teacher mad at you?
- 5) Do you think your teacher was right to be mad?
- 6) How did you feel when your teacher was angry? How do you think your teacher felt?
- 7) What could you have done so that your teacher would not have been angry?

### Session V

#### Objectives:

1. The children will roleplay potentially disruptive behavior situations.
2. The children will discuss feelings evoked by each situation.
3. The children will roleplay alternative responses to each situation.
4. The children will discuss the consequences of each alternative.

Materials: Toy trucks, dolls, and jacks.

#### Activities:

1. Roleplay problems. The counselor introduces this activity by saying, "We all find ourselves in situations which get us angry, so angry we may want to hurt someone else. Everybody gets angry. I want to do some acting now. I will be the director and tell what story we will act out. I will need you to be the actors. The first story we will act begins like this: You and a friend are playing catch on the playground. Someone comes up behind you and pushes you so that you will drop the ball and then starts laughing at you."

"Now I need some volunteers to be the children in this story." The counselor assigns parts to children and has them do the roleplay while the others in the group watch. If the children are having trouble roleplaying, the counselor, or another group member, may suggest dialog or action. Each roleplay will last about 3 minutes.

After the roleplay situation the counselor leads a discussion focusing on the feelings and behaviors of each character. The counselor then asks the members to suggest alternative ways of dealing with the enacted problem. The counselor then asks for volunteers to re-enact the situation using the new alternatives. As before, a discussion of feelings, behaviors, and consequences will follow.

As time allows, any of the following roleplay situations can be acted and discussed in the same manner:

- (a) You ride your bicycle by a person in your class that you don't like. As you ride by him he calls you a stupid pig.
- (b) Your parents blame you and punish you for something you did not do (breaking a lamp).
- (c) Your brother or sister takes one of your favorite new toys without asking you. Then he or she accidentally breaks it. You come in just in time to see your brother or sister trying to fix it.

### Session VI

#### Objectives:

1. The children will make "teacher and student" puppets.

Materials: Six small paper bags with no writing on them, crayons, magic markers, glue, scissors, scraps of colored construction paper.

Optional: Yarn, ribbon, tissue paper, material, or other scraps.

#### Activity:

1. Making puppets. The counselor should set up art materials around a large table so that children will have to share materials but still have enough room to work. Each child should be given a paper bag, markers, glue, and scissors. The rest of the material should be shared. The counselor says, "We are all going to make puppets. Five of us are going to make 'student' puppets and one of us is going to make a 'teacher' puppet." I need a volunteer to make the

teacher puppet." The counselor chooses one group member to make the teacher puppet.

The counselor then explains how to make a paper bag puppet (it is helpful to have a sample made so the children can easily see how it is done). "Before you begin, let me give you some directions. Do not unfold your bag. The bottom flap of the bag will be the face and moving part of the puppet." The counselor demonstrates as he is speaking. "You may decorate your puppet anyway you wish. You might want to use colored paper or material for clothes. You might like to use yarn or tissue paper for hair. Remember, you are making student puppets and a teacher puppet. Be sure to put a face on your puppet." The counselor helps the students as they make their puppets. When the children are finished the counselor collects the puppets so that they may be used in the next session.

### Session VII

#### Objectives:

1. The children will develop a list of problem situations at school which might evoke disruptive behavior.
2. The children will select from the list the three situations which are of most concern to them.
3. The children will dramatize the selected situations through the puppetplay.
4. The children will discuss feelings portrayed through the puppetry.
5. The children will dramatize alternative ways of dealing with the problem situations and discuss the consequences of each alternative.

Materials: The puppets which were made in Session VI, black-board or chart paper, and markers.

#### Activities:

1. Brainstorming problems. The counselor says, "During the last few weeks we have talked about some situations which may cause us to get angry. Last time I made up the situations and you acted them out. This time, I'd like you to think of problem situations that you face at school. For example, you may be standing in line to get your lunch and someone butts in line in front of you. We will list as many problems as we can think of. Don't be afraid to mention any problem which comes to your mind, as long as it

happens in school." The counselor lists the problems on the blackboard or on chart paper as each child contributes one.

2. Ranking problems. The counselor then says, "Now let's decide which three of these situations bother us the most by taking a vote." The group then votes on which situations bother them the most. The three situations which receive the most votes will be dramatized by puppetplay.
3. Puppetplay problems. The counselor says, "Now we are going to use our puppets to act out the first situation. I need some volunteers to be in this first situation." The counselor chooses children to act out each part with their puppets. If the children are having trouble with their puppetplay, the counselor, or another group member, may contribute dialog or action. Each puppetplay will last about 3 minutes.

After the puppetplay situation, the counselor leads a discussion focusing on the feelings and behaviors of each character. The counselor then asks the members to suggest alternative ways of dealing with the enacted problem. The counselor asks for volunteers to re-enact the situation using the new alternatives. Again, a discussion of feelings, behaviors, and consequences will follow.

The counselor proceeds in a similar manner for the other two puppetplay situations. If time permits, the children may dramatize other situations on their list.

### Session VIII

#### Objectives:

1. The children will learn to cooperate with each other by participating in the puzzle experience.
2. The children will share their feelings about the puzzle experience.

Materials: Three puzzles (each puzzle contains 15 pieces and forms a 9" by 6" picture), three blindfolds.

#### Activities:

1. Puzzle experience. The counselor shows the group three puzzles all put together and says, "Here are three simple puzzles which I'm sure all of you could put together. I would like three of you to each put



a puzzle together, and then the other three will get a chance to try." The counselor takes the puzzles apart and lets each child take a turn at putting the puzzles together.

Next the counselor says, "That was simple enough. Now we're going to play a game. I'm going to blindfold each of you and ask you to put the puzzle together with the blindfold on. I challenge anyone to do this within two minutes. I would like three volunteers to go first." The counselor blindfolds the first three children, sits them down in front of their puzzle, and gives them a starting signal. After two minutes the counselor says stop. Then the other three children take their turn. After this experience, the counselor leads a discussion on how the children felt about it.

Next the counselor says, "Now we are going to change this game. I want each of you to choose a partner and sit next to him." After the children find a partner the counselor continues, "I'm going to blindfold one person from each pair and ask that person to put the puzzle together with the help of his partner. The partner may help the blindfolded person put the puzzle together in any way except actually putting the pieces on the puzzle board himself. The partner can give directions, hand puzzle pieces to the blindfolded person, and guide the blindfolded person's hand. Are there any questions?" The counselor answers any questions the children may have. Then the counselor blindfolds one child from each pair and gives the puzzle pieces to the other partner. A starting signal is given and the children begin the task. The children should be given ample time to complete the task. Roles should be reversed so that the other child also may experience being blindfolded and helped.

A discussion of feelings evoked by the experience follows. The counselor concludes the session by summarizing the feelings mentioned, pointing out similarities and differences and saying, "We all feel angry and frustrated at times, like when we were blindfolded and tried to put the puzzle together ourselves. But we have learned that if we cooperate with someone else we can often solve our problems. When we worked in partners we were able to put the puzzle together. We completed the puzzle by cooperating even though we couldn't do it ourselves."



### Session IX

#### Objective:

1. The children will model out of clay an object they wish to give to a partner and explain their selection to the group.

Material: A large fistful of clay per student.

#### Activity:

1. Clay modeling. The counselor begins by saying, "I would like each of you to choose a partner and sit together." After the children are sitting in partners, the counselor gives each child some clay. "Now that we have gotten to know each other better, I want you to think about your partner. Try to think of something you would give him if you could give him anything in the world. One girl I know made a puppy for her partner because she knew her partner always wanted a dog. One boy gave to his partner a magic pencil that always wrote neatly because he knew his partner had a messy handwriting. When you have thought of something you'd like to give your partner make it out of clay. Be prepared to explain what you have made." The counselor helps the children as they make their clay objects.

After all the children have finished the counselor says, "Now we are going to take turns giving our objects to each other and explaining why we are giving them to our partner." Each child gives and explains his object. The counselor points out differences and similarities in the objects, the reasons for giving the objects, and the feelings behind the reasons.

### Session X

#### Objective:

1. The children will give positive feedback to each other.

Materials: Colored magic markers, at least a 5" by 14" piece of poster board for each student.

#### Activity:

1. Strength bombardment. The counselor says, "We know each other well enough to tell each other some good things about each other. I'm giving each of you a piece of poster board and some magic markers. You are to use the magic markers to write your first name

on your poster board. Make sure you write it big enough to be seen easily." The counselor helps those who need it while the children make their name tags.

When everyone is finished, the counselor says, "I want everyone to pass their name tag to me. I'm going to pick one name tag out at a time. I will hold it up so we can all see the name on it. I want each of you to tell the person whose name tag I chose something good about him or her. For example, you might say, 'You have pretty hair,' or 'You have a good sense of humor,' or 'You like to help others.' As each of you say something good to the person, I will write it down on his name tag so that he may keep it and remember it." The counselor chooses a name tag and gives each child a turn to say something good about that person. The child whose name tag is chosen listens to what the others say about him. The counselor proceeds in a similar manner until each child's name tag has been chosen. After the children get their name tags back, the counselor encourages those who wish to share their feelings with the group asking such questions as:

- 1) How did it feel to hear others say nice things about you?
- 2) Were you surprised at anything that was said about you?
- 3) How did it feel to tell someone something nice?
- 4) Can you think of anyone outside of this group who you would like to say something nice to?

APPENDIX F  
THE DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR RATING SCALE

by  
Robert T. Bleck

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
School \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Circle the word in parentheses that best describes your behavior for the past two weeks.

1. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) do what I'm supposed to do.
2. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) argue with other children.
3. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) make fun of or laugh at other children.
4. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) poke or push other children.
5. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) take something that belongs to someone else without asking.
6. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) follow my teacher's directions.
7. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) fight with other children.
8. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) complete my school work on time.
9. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) am punished by my teacher.
10. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) get my teacher angry with me.

11. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) talk when I'm not supposed to.
12. I (rarely) (sometimes) (often) (almost always) shout out in class.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

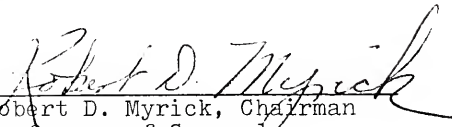
Robert T. Bleck was born September 17, 1950, in Brooklyn, New York. He married Bonnie Lyn Hirsch on June 8, 1974.

Mr. Bleck was graduated from East Meadow High School in June, 1968. In June, 1972, he was graduated with honors from the State University of New York at Albany, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in psychology and a minor in English. In September, 1973, he began his graduate studies at the University of Florida Department of Counselor Education. He received his Master of Education and Specialist of Education degrees in June, 1975, and his Doctor of Philosophy degree in June, 1977.

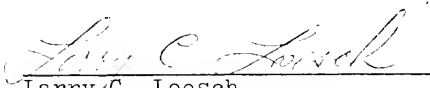
While pursuing his graduate degrees, Mr. Bleck served as a graduate assistant with the Undergraduate Studies Office in Education. Later, he was employed by the Alachua County School Board as an elementary school counselor where he has served to date.

Mr. Bleck was elected to Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. He is a member of the American Personnel and Guidance Association and the American School Counselors' Association. He has presented various programs at national and state guidance conventions, published research articles, and participated in a film about developmental counseling in the elementary school.

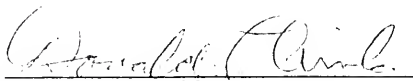
I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

  
Robert D. Myrick, Chairman  
Professor of Counselor  
Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

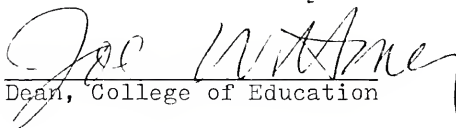
  
Larry C. Loesch  
Assistant Professor of  
Counselor Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

  
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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Education and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

June, 1977

  
Dean, College of Education

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